

ATTENDANCE:

Lisa Reddy Farrell
Elizabeth Young Jojo
Benn MacDonald
Angelo Maddox
Neil McGreevy
Amanda Rozsavolgyi
Cameron Sagan
Adam Sanders
Josh Wainman
Frank Zeoli

ABSENT:

Leola Edelin
Jim Hart
Mohamed Hemmid
Leyla Kiosse
Hon. Darius Shahinfar

STAFF PRESENT:

Jevan Dollard
Caroline Murray
Georgette Steffens
Don Wilson

21 Lodge Street
Albany, NY 12207
p 518.465.2143
f 518.465.0139
www.downtownalbany.org

Georgette Steffens
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Elizabeth Young Jojo
PRESIDENT

Lisa Reddy Farrell
VICE-PRESIDENT

Angelo Maddox
TREASURER

Neil McGreevy
SECRETARY

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Young Jojo at 4:07 PM.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Young Jojo calls for a motion to approve the February 2025 meeting minutes | Mr. Zeoli motions | Mr. Sagan seconded | All approved and the motion passed.

Presidents Report

Board Elections

Ms. Young Jojo stated we officially launched our Board election process yesterday. Benn MacDonald and Josh Wainman will renew for a second term on the BID Board. There are 6 property owner positions and 1 commercial tenant position up for election. Ms. Young Jojo reminded the Board that nominations are due Friday, May 16. She encouraged current Board members to nominate candidates.

Treasurer's Report

First Quarter Financials

Mr. Maddox stated the organization is in strong financial position. There was not much of note or concern in the first quarter financials. He said most of the differences in budget verses actuals were related to timing issues. He turned it over to Ms. Steffens and she highlighted the following items:

- Travel & Mileage – budgeted to start in the second quarter but had some minor travel in the first quarter
- Clean & Safe Sub-Contracts – we are waiting for invoices for February and March clean team services
- Pearlpalooza Expense – that is for 2024 and will be recorded as such shortly

Funding Requests

Mr. Maddox stated the staff have one funding request and turned it over to Ms. Steffens to provide the details of the request. She stated:

- Alive @ Five promotions – city moved Alive @ Five to Tricentennial Park and BID will be conducting enhanced marketing efforts to keep concert attendees post show – efforts include a-frames, window clings, magnets, bingo boards, and more - \$5,417

Mr. Maddox called for a motion to approve the funding request for Alive @ Five in the amount of \$5,417 | Ms. Young Jojo motioned | Mr. Sagan seconded | All members approved.

Committee Report

Marketing Committee

Ms. Rozsavolgyi reported the BID hired Nicolle Mendoza as our new content creator. Nicolle will be contracted through the end of the calendar year, as previously approved by the board. She has over 10 years of experience in marketing, digital engagement, and community outreach. Prior to relocating to Albany, Nicolle worked for the Downtown Ontario Business Improvement Association in Ontario, California.

Ms. Rozsavolgyi stated the Committee discussed strategies to increase public support for the recently announced \$400 million state investment. Recognizing potential skepticism in the community, the Committee discussed a testimonial campaign aimed at:

- Highlighting successful Downtown businesses
- Fostering a sense of pride in the Downtown area
- Amplifying authentic community voices to promote the value of the investment

She said the BID will begin reaching out to business owners/business leaders for testimonials and start formulating a “Downtown to the Core” campaign.

Ms. Rozsavolgyi stated the Committee reviewed plans for upcoming spring event and they will reconvene to provide updates and continue development of the campaign.

Executive Director's Report

Downtown Data

Ms. Steffens presented the following data points to the Board about Downtown:

- 300 more unique employees came to Downtown in the first quarter of 2025 and the number of times they visited increase by 1.6%
- Visitors increased 6% over the previous 12 months
- 199 total retail storefronts in Downtown with 35% vacant
- 20 vacant buildings out of 278 properties

The Board discussed the narrative currently being pushed in the news regarding a large numbers of companies/employees moving out of Downtown as the numbers don't reflect that. The Board talked about the need for a retail attraction program.

CAP Update

Ms. Steffens shared ESD has selected the consulting firm and is negotiating the contract. They hope to announce the team in the next two weeks around the time of the state budget passing.

Ms. Steffens stated ESD shared the \$200 million is for capital projects only. ESD said they would look at other state funding sources for projects like event activation, public relations campaigns, and retail attraction programs. The Board expressed concerns about noncapital projects not being able to be funded through the \$200 million investment. Several small business owners shared fear of businesses closing if they did not receive assistance. Ms. Steffens stated she continues to express that at every meeting with ESD staff.

Wayfinding

Ms. Steffens stated signs were delivered today and will begin being installed. A press event unveiling the signage program is scheduled for next Wednesday at 11 AM near the pedestrian bridge entrance by DASNY. She invited all Board members to attend.

Events Update

Mr. Dollard provided stated 160 individuals participated in our Earth Day Clean Up collecting over 800 pounds of garbage. The thanked Coulson's for providing lunch for the volunteers and Prince Fuels for their sponsorship.

Mr. Dollard highlighted our Downtown Living Open House taking place tomorrow. People can tour five residential buildings either during lunch or in the evening, or both. All buildings are pet friendly which sets Downtown apart from most rentals.

Ms. Steffens stated the BID released the call for artists for our new round of Downtown is Pawsome. Already we have received 40 applications. She reminded Board members there are still sponsorship opportunities available and said to contact her if anyone is interested.

Other Business

Mr. Zeoli shared with the Board the City is installing their first smart public restroom with a self-cleaning toilet. He stated the company is Urban Blu and said he will keep us posted on how it is working for them and if it would be worth the BID considering this as an option for a public restroom in Downtown.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:36 PM.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 11, at 4:00 PM

21 Lodge Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room